



GOOD RIDDANCE TO TRANS!



Memo from MFJ

The partially hydrogenated oils in margarine, shortening, french fries, and thousands of processed foods contain trans fat. Twenty years ago, scientists (including me) thought trans was innocuous.

Since then, we've learned otherwise. In the late 1980s, studies began to show that trans fat actually promotes heart disease. In 1993, that evidence led us to ask the Food and Drug Administration to require food labels to disclose trans levels.

Trans fat is at least as bad as saturated fat, since it raises LDL ("bad") cholesterol about as much as sat fat does. That was reason enough for the National Academy of Sciences to recommend in 2002 that people consume as little trans as possible.

Newer evidence indicates that trans may be even more harmful than saturated fat. Unlike sat fat, trans lowers blood levels of HDL ("good") cholesterol. And several large epidemiological studies suggest that trans fat poses an even greater heart disease

risk than its effects on cholesterol levels would explain. (Of course, it's always possible that something else about people who eat more trans contributes to their higher risk.) Indeed, last April an advisory committee to the FDA concluded that trans fat is worse than saturated fat.

The bottom line: trans fat could be causing 20,000 or more deaths a year.

That's why we recently petitioned the FDA to prohibit the use of partially hydrogenated oils. Some companies are already headed down that road.

Among the foods that are, or are soon to be, almost or totally trans-free: most Frito-Lay chips, Triscuits, some Oreos, Promise margarine, and I Can't Believe It's Not Butter. Crisco now has a trans-free version. And Ruby Tuesday's has switched to (trans-free) canola oil for its fried foods.

I hope you will join our campaign to get rid of partially hydrogenated oils. Please mail the coupon or send a letter, fax, or e-mail. To learn (and do) more, go to www.transfreeAmerica.org.

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